

Fowl
Feathered
Review

No 249

ISSUE № 249: Accepted as Fragment,
Declared Sufficient



ABOUT THE ASSEMBLAGE (COLLECTED UNDER PRACTICAL CONDITIONS)

The FFR is no longer to be understood as a journal, nor as any prior category such as “Necrosign.” It is instead a distributed production practice: a gathering-method for the generation, capture, and long-

duration storage of emergent artifacts arising between human habit and mechanical repetition.

For ease of handling, we describe it as a shared frequency—commonly misidentified as the idle-pattern of a small automobile (late 20th-century compact class) standing in a parking lot at approximately 03:00—but this is merely the audible index-layer.

In its working state, the Assemblage conducts continuous retrieval from verifiable material domains: instruction sheets, retail surfaces, transit markings, service logs, and other document-objects of daily use. These are not preserved intact. They are subjected to pressure, displacement, and reclassification.

We do not curate in the modern sense. We maintain instead an **Offenrückraum** (open-back space), in which items may enter, settle, or misfile themselves.

Participants (hereafter: “important locals”) are those who exhibit **Dauerträglichkeit**—a useful persistence under minor strain. Fragility is not prohibited, but it is structurally unsupported.

Any submission that appears to strive toward “Art” in the self-declarative sense will be reassigned to a more stable function (e.g., table-leveling, draft-blocking, oil-absorption).



ON THE OPERATION OF SOURCE-ENGINES (ALWAYS IN PARTIAL MOTION)

The Assemblage employs several standing procedures, here summarized for clarity:

- **Warenregisterbruch (Arcade Index Condition)**

Fragments are extracted from catalogs, labels, packaging, and signage. Context is removed. Adjacency is reassigned. Authority increases in proportion to specificity, regardless of accuracy.

- **Protokollhäufung (Dossier Stack Condition)**

Records accumulate: maintenance notes, claims, timestamps. Gaps are preserved. Contradictions are not resolved. A sequence may appear, but closure is considered a filing error.

- **Randbemerkungsdrift (False Commentator Condition)**

Functional texts (manuals, glossaries, guides) are annotated beyond their tolerance. Explanations become misaligned. Confidence is retained.

- **Anweisungsschnitt (Cut-Up Recorder Condition)**

Instruction-language is segmented and recombined. Repetition introduces rhythm. Meaning is reduced until only procedure-residue remains.

All outputs must retain **Rückverfolgbarkeit** (trace-feel): the impression that the fragment could be located again in some drawer, binder, or glove compartment.

Where this condition fails, the material is considered decorative and is removed.

A recurring sonic marker—transcribed provisionally as “**dor**”—is permitted to enter any layer. Its function remains under study.



THE STAFF (SINK-CUSTODIANS / FUNCTION-BEARERS)

- **Virgil Kay**: Final Arbiter. Currently engaged in the classification of falling bakery items under aerodynamic variance. Maintains decision authority, though criteria are mobile.

- **Silent Bill**: Overseer of Tactical Non-Sequiturs. Executes **Satzabbruchhandlung** (sentence-break action) by leaving mid-utterance. This is considered a valid editorial intervention.

- **Unkie Bob**: Assigned to Casual Entropy. No longer dismantles structures directly; instead applies insufficient fastening (**Lockerbefestigung**), allowing failure to emerge without announcement.

- **The Unnamed Dishwasher**: Not recorded in official listings. Present regardless. Performs continuous surface-restoration under high focus. Functions as **Kerntriebwerk** (core engine). Prolonged observation is discouraged.



THE PERPETUAL PENDING PLEDGE (STANDING CONDITION)

The Review is not offered for sale; it is made available.

All incoming funds are classified as **Zweckfreie Gaben** (non-instrumental offerings), directed not toward exchange but toward sustaining an ongoing condition designated Obsession8888.

The registry has been converted from numeric to vibrational notation:

Vi · ∞ · 432Hz

Field reports indicate this frequency may present not as tone but as mechanical rattle (loose shielding, low-end vibration). This is not considered deviation.

The 9-volt battery is dead. Its status remains in force.



SUBMISSION PROTOCOL (PRACTICAL INTAKE / REPURPOSING PRIORITY)

1. **The Material**
Submit between 2 and 953 fragments. Acceptable forms include text, image, diagram, list, or overheard exchange (e.g., dispute regarding bowling technique). Each item must exhibit **Gebrauchsnähe** (proximity to use): it should resemble something that once functioned or was handled.
2. **The Accompanying Note**
Do not provide institutional histories or award listings. These do not transfer under current conditions.
Instead, supply one of the following:
 - A preferred industrial fastener
 - A tool of uncertain purpose
 - A sound indicating possible malfunction
3. **The Offering (Optional but Structurally Relevant)**
Submission remains free under the Perpetual

Pending Pledge.

However, contributors may include a 12-inch sandwich as a material supplement.

Kewpie Clause (Unrevoked):

Absence of Kewpie Mayonnaise results in immediate reassignment of submitted materials to cleaning or leveling functions.

Kewpie remains the only verified buffer against a system-wide condition provisionally termed the Absolute Cosmic-Cluck.

4. On Repurposing (Important Clarification)

All submitted materials enter a

Weiterverwendungskreis (cycle of further use).

Possible outcomes include:

- Inclusion as fragment within a larger construct
- Mislabeling and redistribution
- Use as structural support (physical or textual)
- Reduction to residue for future recombination

Authors retain attribution only in the loosest archival sense. Function supersedes origin.

5. Delivery

Materials may be delivered, transmitted, or misplaced. Retrieval is opportunistic. Loss is considered a form of delayed submission.



PARK AND RIDE (INGEST POINTS / KNOWN COORDINATES)

Digital: fowlpoxpress@mail2poet.com

Physical: 250.50∞ State Street, Bangor, Maine, 04401

ERRATUM:

If the registered frequency resolves as a rattle rather than

a tone, no adjustment is required. The rattle is to be understood as a valid form of expression.

If a unit accepts value while returning the object, the transaction is considered complete.



“Non ignora mali, miseris succurrere
disco.”

— Virgil, The Aeneid





THE WHOOPEE FUGUES

By HD Service

You know how it is. One minute you're minding your own business in a rent-controlled railroad flat on West 88th, the next you're wearing a pair of Groucho glasses and trying not to laugh so hard you spill your jug wine on the turntable. That was the Baroque Banter LP Club for you. Nineteen seventy-three, give or take.

They arrived every fourth Tuesday like clockwork, or like a practical joke that had learned how to use the mails.

The outer wrapper was always the same: plain brown paper, no return address except a small rubber-stamped lyre with a whoopee cushion where the sound hole should be. Inside lay two things. First, a twelve-

inch record in a sleeve that looked like it had been designed by a deranged Freemason—orange and acid green, hexagrams, violins morphing into fleur-de-lis, the whole baroque geometry trip. Second, the tin.

Lord, that tin.

It was the color of a cheap cigar box and about the same size. Lift the lid and there they were, arranged like surgical instruments: the Groucho glasses with the plastic nose already slightly askew, the squirt ring loaded and ready, the phony finger with the nail driven through it at a medically improbable angle, the whoopie cushion folded with military neatness, and the shock buzzer, that small chrome monster that delivered a jolt just strong enough to make a grown man reconsider his position on French overdotting.

The record itself carried no liner notes in the usual sense. Just a typed slip that read, in perfect IBM Selectric Courier:

BAROQUE BANTER SOCIETY
Volume XVII: "Tremblant Fort
or Tremblant Doux? A Question
of Moral Character"

Recorded live, 11:47 p.m.,
somewhere in a former
Methodist chapel on the Upper
West Side.

You dropped the needle and the room
changed.

First you heard the low clink of ice in
heavy glasses, then a voice—cultured,
slightly nasal, the kind that had spent
too many years in graduate seminars—
saying, "If Couperin really intended
the overdotting, then the entire French

baroque is an act of passive aggression against the Italians, and I for one salute it." Another voice, deeper, more impatient, cut in: "That is the single most pretentious sentence uttered north of 14th Street this year." Laughter. Someone lit a cigarette.

Then the argument really got going.

They debated organ registration the way other men argued about the pennant race. One fellow kept insisting that choosing the Tremblant fort was essentially a Jacobin act. His opponent countered that it was merely gastrointestinal. Every time a point landed particularly well, you could hear the faint, unmistakable pffffft of a whoopee cushion being deployed under someone's chair. It was all part of the ritual.

The instructions printed on the inside of the record sleeve were admirably clear:

1. Don the Groucho glasses before Side One.
2. Keep the squirt ring on your right hand. Use only when a speaker employs the phrase “authentically baroque.”
3. At the first mention of “dispositions of the habitus,” deploy the shock buzzer on the nearest available wrist. (This happened more often than you might think.)

I still remember the night I invited a perfectly respectable assistant professor of sociology over to hear Volume XXII. The man lasted twelve minutes before the fake nailed finger was waved under his nose and he began quoting Gramsci in self-defense. By the time the record reached the

part where two organists and one very stoned harpsichord builder started arguing whether the baroque trill constituted a microaggression against the listener's autonomy, my guest was on the floor, clutching the whoopee cushion like a life raft and muttering something about subaltern counterpublics.

That was the peculiar genius of the thing. It understood that the distance between high culture and low comedy is not very far at all—barely the width of a harpsichord key, really. One month they would have three scholars earnestly debating whether the Bourdon 16 stop represented the voice of God or merely the lower intestine. The next month the same voices would be reduced to helpless giggling because someone had just been shocked mid-peroration.

The club folded sometime around '78 or '79. The usual story: the man who ran it (nobody ever learned his real name; he signed every mailing simply "Le Grand Hautbois") moved to Vermont to raise goats and never quite explained why. But for a few bright years there existed this small, ridiculous, strangely tender conspiracy: people who believed that the proper way to honor the extravagant, theatrical, slightly mad spirit of the baroque was to mail one another plastic novelty items and recorded arguments that occasionally dissolved into pure anarchy.

I still have the tins. Six of them, stacked on a shelf next to the old AR turntable. Every so often I take one down, open the lid, and the faint smell of rubber and cheap metal rises up like incense. I put on one of the surviving records, slip on the Groucho glasses

out of habit, and for twenty minutes or so the 1970s come back in all their improbable glory—half salon, half circus, entirely serious and completely unserious at the same time.

And somewhere in the middle of a particularly heated exchange about whether the Prestant 4 was spiritually superior to the Quinte 2 2/3, you can hear it: the small, unmistakable sound of a grown man trying very hard not to laugh while being electrically buzzed in the palm of his hand.

That, my friends, was culture.





Harbor Carnival: A Narrative Suite

By Beryl Drescher

The harbor is not a harbor. It is the slow drip of time over salt-stained chains, the faint aroma of roasted almonds tangled with diesel and tidal rot that clings like barnacles. At its center, a chocolate suede leather plain-toe boot spins – buoyed by invisible currents, at once vessel, artifact, and absurdist sculpture. From its laced hull rises the F-iv5c manuscript fragment as a ragged topsail, Latin letters curling in the wind: “...qualitas...est...ad...melius quam...”. It is not read; it is performed by gusts, tide, and a faintly scandalized chorus of seagulls.

Around the spinning boot, newlyweds orbit in perpetual kiss – pirouetting, locked in misprinted-manual repetition, their rotation synced to the

boot's lazy centrifugal churn. They are not separate from the vessel; they are another misaligned spoke in the wheel.

Above the deck, the Maine Philharmonic fill-in ensemble — students, retirees, fly-by-nights, one-night-only ringers — launches the Harbor Carnival Suite. Violins spiral like eddies. Trombones slide on invisible rails. Percussion fractures into clave patterns while congas argue with metal buckets. The topsail flaps in time with their mistakes.

Movement I – Suede Boat Spin

The boot-boat rotates, a stubborn hub. Latin syllables drag through the air — ad... melius... quam... — pulling the orchestra, the moccasin-tapping feet, the thrifted jackets, and the kissing couples into simultaneous observation

and mild delirium. The manuscript sail becomes kinetic notation: wind-driven, imperfect, directing every spin, every accidental downbeat.

Movement II – Carnival Ledger

Catalog fragments, moccasins, jackets, ruby-like textual grills – each treated as repurposed archival material. Brass punctuates like ledger entries. One retired flutist misreads a motif; the mistake blooms into accidental harmony. Latin and Spanish begin to interlock in a polyrhythmic archipelago. The topsail glints like torn pages, sun catching the absurdity head-on.

Movement III – Echoes of Secular Codices

Piano glissandi trace the sail's flutter. Harp harmonics echo half-remembered syllables. Students wrestle manuscript-derived motifs while retirees improvise on instinct and fly-by-nights loop errors into rhythm. The vocal ensemble drifts between languages: ¡Ay, mambo!... ad... qualitas... fuerit... salsa... Moccasins answer. Jackets sway. The boot-boat and its orbiting newlyweds respond in kind – punctuation turned directly into choreography.

Movement IV – Dockside Polyphony

Chaos begins to crystallize. Percussion locks into clave. Trombones slide unpredictably. Flutes loop miscopied glosses; violin vibrato rides the waves.

The topsail flutters faster, guiding the whole messy trajectory. Orchestra errors, manuscript misreads, and the newlyweds' relentless kissing orbit all feed the same living propulsion – archival chaos made visible, audible, and slightly ridiculous.

Movement V – Maritime Coda & Manuscript Grill

Ruby-grilled letters wink across the water. Motifs resolve imperfectly. Spanish dance phrases fade into irregular measures while Latin fragments linger like stubborn corals around the boot-hull. The boot-boat slowly rights itself. The newlyweds pause long enough to sip lattes from paper cups. The ensemble aligns – not perfectly, but organically – producing a radiant, slightly off-kilter closure.

Footnotes bloom into paragraphs, paragraphs into living tableaux: alpaca-insulated moccasins, thrifted jackets, the chocolate suede boot-boat with its manuscript sail, all observed with perverse acuity under the harbor light.

Each movement carries the refrain forward: early flutter of ¡Ay, mambo! ¡Cha-cha!, mid-harbor surge of ¡Salsa, rumba, guaguancó!, coda dissolving into irregular syncopation where Latin overlays Spanish — ad... qualitas... fuerit... mambo.... The manuscript sail remains the driver: guiding boot-spin, orchestra tempo, dancers' steps, and the newlyweds' orbit in one kinetic singularity of gesture and letter.

As the sun dips, the topsail gives its final flutter: "qualitas est ad... melius quam...". Congas whisper ¡Ay, mambo!. The chocolate boot-boat settles in

twilight, manuscript savil limp against the mast. The harbor falls quiet, but the resonance lingers – alive in memory, improvisation, and the chaotic, joyous imperfection of the Harbor Carnival Suite.

The harbor, the boot, the manuscript, the orbiting newlyweds, the fill-in orchestra, the jewel-like letters, the moccasins, the jackets – all one organism, spinning, swaying, misreading, and improvising together. A fusion of text, sound, motion, and everyday absurdity, realized through three cycles of meticulous sanding and surgical attention.



THE LAMB, THE CLUB, AND THE PRETTIEST GIRL IN BANGOR

(A TABLEAU OF MORAL ABSURDITY,
HYPERBOLIC JUSTICE, AND THE
INEVITABLE TRIUMPH OF THE NAÏVE
OVER THE CYNICAL)

By Archibald T. Pekoe

—WITH A DISPUTATIOUS CHORUS AND
AN IMPROPERLY FILED PACKET OF
“VERIFIED / NON-MYTHIC” DOCUMENTS



Dramatis Personae

THE WOODCUTTER – morally impeccable,
practically unguarded.

THE BEGGAR – ragged by choice;
managerial about fate.

HARLAN, INNKEEPER OF THE BANGOR

ARMS – conscience cured in brine.

THE LAMB – small, serene, financially indefensible.

THE CLUB – a compliance tool with impatience.

THE KING OF BANGOR – young, velvety, criterion-drunk.

THE PRETTIEST GIRL IN BANGOR – beauty with corrective eyesight and opinions sharper than lobster claws.

CHORUS OF BANGOR – flannel witnesses; adjunct moral accountants.

THE ARCHIVE (OFFSTAGE) – insists on being real; cannot spell “door.”



ACT I: The Woodcutter, the Beggar, and the Lamb That Knew Too Much

Scene 1: Bangor, Maine.

A street where the air is 60% pine resin, 30% existential dread, and 10% the lingering suspicion that the universe is a poorly managed boarding house. Shingle roofs crouch like timid punctuation. The pines lean in to eavesdrop. Destiny arrives late, but it arrives with a travel mug. A lobsterman mutters something about a wrong delivery.

CHORUS (to the audience): Bangor is the sort of town where nothing happens without leaving a stain on the paperwork.

Enter **THE WOODCUTTER**, carrying a sandwich wrapped with the reverence usually reserved for promissory notes.

WOODCUTTER: I am going about my day.

CHORUS: He means it. That's his first mistake.

Beneath the Great Pine of Bangor—a tree so old it remembers when “Maine” was still in beta—sits **THE BEGGAR**, arranged like a lesson nobody asked for.

BEGGAR: You there. Spare a crust?

WOODCUTTER (handing over half the sandwich): Tuna. No mayo. I have standards.

BEGGAR (chewing with judicial calm): Standards are admirable. They make a man easier to predict.

The Beggar produces a **LAMB**, blinking with the serene confidence of a creature that knows it has been cast.

BEGGAR: Say the word, and it shall provide.

WOODCUTTER (to the Lamb, experimentally): Uh. Gold?

The Lamb bleats once. Gold coins appear with the cheerful inevitability of an overly attentive snowfall.

CHORUS: In Bangor this is called “a lucky break” and immediately becomes subject to envy, arithmetic, and someone else’s initiative.

WOODCUTTER (staring): Right. I’ll just... take this.

BEGGAR (almost kindly): Of course you will. The Woodcutter scoops up coins, tucks the Lamb under his arm like a controversial receipt, and heads toward town, where he intends to live like a king—or at least like a man who once read a book about kings and didn’t find it wholly discouraging.



 **INSERT – PART 2.75A – SOURCE ENGINES (BANGOR ARMATURE: “LAMB / COIN / DOR”)**

 **ENGINE A – THE ARCADE INDEX RETAIL CATALOG** (housewares / novelty gifts; caption misfiled under “Lawn & Garden”)

COIN-DISPENSING BANK, ANIMAL SHAPE

“LAMB / SHEEP” – molded polymer shell
“Dispenses coins when activated (see manual)”

Batteries: 2xD (not included)

NOTE: “For decorative use. Not legal tender processing equipment.”

BANGOR ARMS INN – GUEST CHECK

(thermal paper, heat-faded)

RM 3A – 1 NIGHT

STEW (BEEF?)

“TABLE COV–” (line torn)

COINAGE ADJ. ... + \$0.00

bottom margin: dor (likely “door”; missing “o”)

INN SIGNAGE (laminated placard; corner curled)

“PLEASE DO NOT MOVE FURNITURE”

“DO NOT BLOCK DO–” (gouged; reads: DO R)



ENGINE B – THE DOSSIER STACK

Bangor Arms – Property & Maintenance Log
(2024 Q2 / Non-criminal)

Guest reports “coin spill” near RM 3A. Floor sweep yielded: 47 mixed coins, 3 washers, 1 button. Accounting: “No overage.” Physical: “Overage.” Margin: dor (circled twice)



ENGINE C – THE FALSE
COMMENTATOR

“dor” is not “door” but DOR = Dispense On Request. Missing “o” indicates restraint, not damage.



ACT II: The Innkeeper, the Swap, and the Club That Had Opinions

Scene 1: The Bangor Arms Inn.

An establishment where the ale is weak, the stew is suspicious, and the innkeeper's smile has the texture of an invoice. A lobsterman passes by delivering a lobster upside-down, muttering "wrong dock again."

HARLAN (aside): A lamb that makes money. The universe is generous—provided one stands near the spout.

WOODCUTTER: A room, please. And maybe—

(He glances at the Lamb, as if consulting a private banker.)

HARLAN: Sir, you are in luck. I have just the thing: a magic cloth that produces whatever you desire.

WOODCUTTER: I already have—

(He stops, because greed is the only philosophy that interrupts itself politely.)

A cloth, you say.

CHORUS: Bangor's entire economy is built on that pause.

The exchange is made: Lamb for cloth. The Lamb bleats in protest—the sound of an honest employee watching management reorganize the company into bankruptcy.



Scene 2: Morning, Room 3A.

The Woodcutter unfurls the cloth with ceremony.

WOODCUTTER: Cloth, provide.

Nothing happens. The cloth sits there being aggressively textile.

CHORUS: This is called “learning,” and it seldom comes with applause.

WOODCUTTER: It appears my miracle has been mislaid.

He returns to the Great Pine with the expression of a man who has discovered that standards do not function as armor.



Scene 3: Beneath the Great Pine.

BEGGAR (not surprised): Ah. You’ve met Harlan.

WOODCUTTER: He tricked me!

BEGGAR: Nonsense. He merely outsmarted you. One is personal; the other is educational.

WOODCUTTER: What do I do now?

The Beggar produces a CLUB—unassuming, like a rulebook, until applied.

BEGGAR: If you need persuasion, speak thus: “Beat away.”

THE CLUB (very quietly): Beat away.

WOODCUTTER: It... talks.

BEGGAR: In Bangor, everything talks. Most of it lies.

The Club taps once, like punctuation that has seen too many adjectives escape prosecution.



Scene 4: The Bangor Arms, again.

Harlan sees the Woodcutter return, accompanied by a club that looks like it has attended seminars on consequence.

HARLAN: Now see here—

THE CLUB: Beat away.

What follows is not violence but a brisk corrective tutorial delivered in furniture.

Chairs are rehomed. Tables achieve new angles. Harlan discovers that morality, when mechanized, has remarkable cardio.

CHORUS: The constabulary later described it as “a disturbance of the peace, but in a good way.”

WOODCUTTER: Enough.

The Club halts, offended only by delay.

Harlan—bruised in the shape of accountability—returns the Lamb, the cloth, and a considerable portion of his humility.



🦷 **INSERT – PART 2.75C – CLOTH / SKU
AMBIGUITY**

Tablecloth (banquet) ... 12.00

Tablecloth (plain) ... 3.00

Butcher—delivery credit ... 1 lamb (arrow;
question mark)

Complaint: “Banquet Cloth does not deploy
meal.”

Seller: “Harlan (counter).”

Remedy requested: “correct cloth OR refund
OR stop club.”

The Archive refuses to decide.



ACT III: The King, the Contest, and the Prettiest Girl in Bangor

Scene 1: The Palace on the Hill.

Velvet everywhere, like a rash of self-esteem.
Enter **KING** and courtiers carrying criteria like umbrellas.

KING: I shall marry the prettiest girl in all lands east of the Penobscot.

CHORUS: Kings announce preference and call it policy.

A decree is issued with vague enthusiasm.

LET IT BE KNOWN

Bring me the prettiest girl in Bangor; reward: half my kingdom, a chest of gold, eternal gratitude.

WOODCUTTER (reading, later): Why not?

He sets out with: coin-producing Lamb, cloth of disputed capability, Club that behaves like punctuation.



Scene 2: The Contest.

MESSENGER: Hair like autumn leaves... gait exceeding dignity of mid-sized oaks... smile capable of collapsing minor weather systems.

KING: None will do.

Then enters PRETTIEST GIRL IN BANGOR,
carrying bread that smells like competence.

CHORUS: She invites resignations.

PRETTIEST GIRL (to the King): Do you
want flattery, or someone to tell you when
your crown is crooked?

KING: ...I... fine.

THE CLUB (tapping): Beat away.

WOODCUTTER: Not now.

PRETTIEST GIRL (to Woodcutter): That
stick—does it belong to you, or to justice?

WOODCUTTER: Whoever behaves.

PRETTIEST GIRL: Then it belongs to
nobody. Only safe arrangement.



Scene 3: The Only Sensible Decision.

The King, faced with a woman he cannot
purchase, a Woodcutter he cannot
intimidate, and a Club that cannot be
negotiated with, arrives—stumbling—at
prudence.

KING: Fine. Marry her. Rule half my
kingdom. Take the Club before it
demonstrates.

THE CLUB (softly): DO NOT
STRIKE.CHORUS: Too late.

EPILOGUE: THE KINGDOM THAT WAS (MOSTLY) HAPPY

Woodcutter marries the Prettiest Girl, who can look at a sentient compliance tool and say, “No,” and be obeyed. They rule half the kingdom. The other half is still being debated in court because Bangor’s legal system enjoys being one. Lamb produces gold. Cloth feasts when it feels like cooperating. The Club taps in corners like an editorial reminder: mind your clauses, mind your motives.

CHORUS: Bangor remains Bangor: pines whisper, rivers reverse themselves, receipts fade, logs contradict each other, and the only consistent witness is a damaged placard that cannot spell door.

SONIC NOTE: Across signage, logs, and scraps, the same intrusion persists:
dor... dor... DO R... dor...

The Archive cannot decide if it is a door, a tone, or an abbreviation. In Bangor, this is sufficient proof that it is all three.

THE END.

*(Or at least until the next folktale files its
warranty claims correctly.)*

A BIBLIOGRAPHY IN THE
MANNER OF A CABINET
THAT REFUSES TO SHUT

*(BEING A PROCESSION OF AUTHORITIES,
CURIOSITIES, AND INK-STAINED
WITNESSES, EACH BOWING, COUGHING,
OR ARRIVING LATE WITH BOOTS FULL
OF MARGINALIA.)*



PRIMARY SOURCES (OR, THE GRAND
PARADE OF INK WITH OPINIONS)

First comes Aleksandr Nikolaevich Afanasyev, who, like a fisherman of shadows, drags from the deep the talking fox, the inconvenient skeleton, the peasant who outwits the moon, and binds them in eight volumes so stout they might double as siege equipment. Later, the same gentleman produces a second sack—*zavetnye*, the “reserved,” the “winked-at”—which circulates as though it had something to confess but insists on doing so in the cloakroom.

Hot upon his heels, a certain Marcin Bielski arrives with a *Kronika wszystkiego świata*, which is to say, everything, yes everything, compressed into a book large enough to alarm a lectern.

Then strides in the prince-scholar
Dimitrie Cantemir, carrying
Moldavia under one arm and the
Ottoman Empire under the other,
each periodically expanding and
contracting to suit the Latin sentence.
He writes as if empires were
accordions.

Our presiding guru, Benedykt
Chmielowski, produces his *Nowe
Ateny*, a work so complete it explains
not only what is known but what
might be known if only it would sit
still. Open it anywhere and it answers
a question you did not know you had,
often about livestock.

Enter Vladimir Ivanovich Dal, who
attempts the impossible: to net the

Russian language entire, each word wriggling like a silver fish, refusing the hook but admiring the effort.

Behind him, pale and observant, comes Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol with *Dead Souls*, a ledger of humanity in which the entries breathe, complain, and occasionally abscond.

A Genevan compiler, Simon Goulart, wheels in a *Thrésor*—a treasury of admirable things—which, upon inspection, contains chiefly the admirable fact that people have always behaved astonishingly.

From Prague, Václav Hájek z Libočan presents a chronicle so patriotic that history itself salutes.

A practical man, Jakub Kazimierz Haur, brings a treasury of estate secrets: how to coax, store, mend, and occasionally outwit the soil, which is known to have moods.

There follows the *Khronograf*—anonymous, composite, and perfectly willing to let centuries speak at once like a choir that has misplaced its conductor.

Jan Amos Comenius escorts us through a labyrinth that looks suspiciously like the world, then offers a heart as the only reliable exit.

A jovial classicist, Ivan Petrovych Kotliarevsky, refashions Virgil into something that eats dumplings and laughs at authority.

The *Magnum Speculum* arrives as a mirror so large it reflects exempla back into exempla until one is unsure whether one is reading or being read. P. D. Ouspensky appears with a third instrument of thought, insisting that two were insufficient and that reality has been underperforming.

The surgeon Ambroise Paré lays out monsters and marvels with the calm of a man who has seen worse on a Tuesday.

The venerable *Physiologus* releases animals that are half sermon, half zoology, and entirely convinced of their allegorical obligations.

Then—trumpets, tankards, and a certain gastronomic thunder—François Rabelais storms the room, bringing giants who eat, argue, and philosophize with the same enthusiasm.

D. A. Rovinskii pins up popular prints—*lubki*—where saints, soldiers, and scandal share the same woodcut grin.

Finally, Johann Weyer enters to argue, with admirable sanity, that not every witch requires a bonfire and not every devil warrants a contract.

SECONDARY SOURCES (OR, THE COMMENTATORS WHO REFUSE TO WHISPER)

A modern voice, Anthony Anemone, catalogs the monsters of the Kunstkamera, where curiosity is bottled and labeled with a steady hand.

Mikhail Bakhtin laughs—profoundly, academically, and at length—explaining that the grotesque body is not a problem but a festival.

Maria Carlson traces a movement that insists truth outranks religion, a claim that immediately attracts both admiration and footnotes.

Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park arrange wonders into an order so elegant that the wonders briefly behave.

A. Karneev annotates the *Physiologus* tradition, proving that even allegorical lions require paperwork.

L. S. Kovtun studies the *azbukovniki*, those alphabetical cabinets where knowledge lines up obediently under letters but not necessarily under reason.

Stephen M. Norris shows how images go to war and return as identity.

Russell Zguta reconstructs the skomorokhi—jesters, wanderers, licensed nuisances—from the

disapproving records of those who preferred silence.

NOTES (OR, THE DRAWER OF THINGS THAT WOULD NOT SIT STILL)

Azbukovniki. Not a book but a habit—a tendency of knowledge to alphabetize itself and then wander off between entries.

Tolkovaia Paleia. A text that grows like a city: no founding moment, only accretion, amendment, and the occasional architectural surprise.

Velikoe Zertsalo. A mirror translated, adapted, and circulated in manuscript, reflecting reflections until provenance becomes a polite suggestion.

Lubok Prints. Popular images where theology, satire, and gossip share the same ink and refuse to take turns.

Kunstkamera. A museum where Peter the Great collected the abnormal to prove a point about normality, which promptly resigned.

Skomorokhi. Performers known chiefly through complaints, which is to say they were effective.

Nowe Ateny. A work quoted for its horse, though the horse itself remains unavailable for comment.



CANDOR (OR, THE COMPILER
REMOVES HIS HAT AND ADMITS THE
WEATHER)

Certain dates wobble, certain printers hide, certain Geneva shadows refuse to sign the guestbook. The Dutch edition of Goulart may have slipped its publisher; Afanas'ev's more mischievous tales prefer anonymity; Kovtun and Karneev hover in that respectable fog where scholarship is certain but pagination coy.

Consult, therefore, the grand oracles: the WorldCat, the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, the Biblioteka Narodowa, and the Russian State Library—those cathedrals of catalog

where every book eventually confesses
its address.



And thus the cabinet closes—poorly,
magnificently, with one drawer still
ajar, muttering citations into the dark.



AUTHORIZED WHILE LEGIBLE

— KLEAN FITCH

THERMAL UNIT, FOWL FEATHERED REVIEW

